

**WABASH RIVER HERITAGE CORRIDOR COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Minutes – November 9, 2005**  
**Indiana Government Center**  
**Indianapolis, IN**

<b>Voting Members Present:</b> Allen County – Paul McAfee Cass County – Mercedes Brugh DNR – Steve Morris Huntington County – Mike Mettler Knox County – Shane Cooper Miami County – Ken Einselen Parke County – Steve Luther Posey County – Ralph Weinzapfel Sullivan County – John Gettinger Tippecanoe County – Norman (Lucky) Neiburger Vigo County – Keith Ruble (alternate) Warren County – Louise Jewell		<b>Voting Members Absent w/o Proxy:</b> Carroll County Fountain County Gibson County Jay County Posey County Vermillion County
<b>Proxies</b> Steve Krull – Adams County		<b>Non-Voting Members Not Present</b> INDOT Indiana Tourism
<b>Non-Voting Members Present:</b> IDEM – Martha Clark Mettler DNR-DHPA – Karen Hanes		<b>Guests:</b> Phillip Cox – Cinergy
<b>Commission and DNR Staff Present:</b> Ron James – WRHCC Executive Director Karen Hanes – DNR Outdoor Recreation		

**CALL TO ORDER**

John Gettinger called the meeting to order at 1 PM. John asked everyone to introduce themselves and the county they represent.

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup> MEETING MINUTES**

John Gettinger asked for approval of the September 14<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes. Paul McAfee made a motion to approve the minutes. Norman Neiburger seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

John Gettinger distributed a written report of events he attended (see attached). John reported the Sullivan County 8<sup>th</sup> grade raft trip on the Wabash River went very well. John also attended the Indiana Academy of Science annual meeting that included a Wabash River Symposium. John suggested the idea of having an Indiana River Rally sometime in the future. John is also helping to set up a 3 day teaching program for fourth grade class that will use the river as the main teaching tool.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT** (see attached)

Ron James submitted a detailed report that was sent out with the meeting agenda. Ron reported that in attending the recent Heritage Conference he found out that the Wabash River Heritage Corridor is one of a few State Heritage Corridors, if not the only one as the rest are federal. Ron suggested the commission take a closer look at the "Main Street" Program. It was suggested to invite Ellen Harper, head of the Indiana Main Street Program, to speak at a future commission meeting. Ron also reported receiving notice of IDEM public meetings to discuss setting pollution standards for Indiana streams and rivers. Ken Einselen reported attending the meeting in Huntington. Mike Mettler suggested Stacy Goodwin as speaker on this topic at a future meeting.

## **FINANCE REPORT** (see attached)

Steve Morris passed out the latest financial report. Mercedes Brugh asked about the membership dues that were voted on at the last commission meeting. Ron James stated he has started the process to pay the dues for membership in related organizations. Norman Neiburger reported he was unable to schedule a meeting with Director Hupfer in regards to the motion passed at the last meeting to check into the DNR Purchasing error that resulted in a \$14,000 shortfall for the commission this fiscal year. After some discussion it was decided to develop an adjusted commission budget to account for the error and possibly arrange a meeting with the DNR Director for sometime in early 2006. Mercedes Brugh made a motion that the executive committee schedule a meeting with the Director Hupfer. Paul McAfee seconded the motion. Steve Luther proposed amending the motion that Norman Neiburger not pursue an explanation for the purchasing error. Paul McAfee seconded the amendment. Motion passed.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Legislative:** no report. Ron James suggested the committee start looking to the long session and some planning that should be done. Steve Morris suggested that the commission extend an invitation to Director Hupfer to attend and possibly address the commission for the January meeting. It was suggested that the invitation be extended to the legislators as well. John Gettinger will put together a list of WRHCC accomplishments to handout to the legislators. Mercedes Brugh, Norman Neiburger, John Gettinger, Ron James and Shane Cooper will form the committee.

**Water Trail:** Ron James reported that the bids should be ready to go out next week. The bid is for the design only. There is still additional information needed from the counties. Ron distributed a copy of what he received for Cass County as an example of what each county should submit. Ron also presented a timeline for the water trail project grand opening. It was agreed to use the timeline as a check list. Norman Neiburger suggested each county plan a grand opening event. John Gettinger asked each commission member to bring their "grand opening" ideas to the January meeting.

**River Road/Heritage:** Louise Jewell reported getting an estimate of \$6 to \$7 for signs similar to the ones being used in Delphi. It was suggested to use the Wabash River Community or Water Trail design but alter to River Road. Steve Morris suggested

looking into the possibility of getting a collection of river roads designated as a state scenic by-way.

**Wabash Video:** The Wabash Valley Association commitment of \$20,000 has not been delivered yet. Hoosier Energy sent in \$6,000 for the project instead of the \$5,000 pledged earlier.

**Education:** John Gettinger reported that Lafayette is interested in putting on a program like the Sullivan County 8<sup>th</sup> grade River Rafter trip. John is willing to assist with anyone interested in putting on the same program.

Phillip Cox reported on an environmental educational program at the Cinergy plant in Vermillion County.

**Newsletter:** Ron stated the printed newsletter has been mailed out. The Reflections email newsletter has not been sent out yet, but would be before the next meeting.

**Interpretive Brochure:** Steve Morris reported the printed corridor brochures are in storage. We have received the approval letter to begin shipping to the state rest areas and welcome centers.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Commission Retreat 2006**

Ron James recommended a committee be put together for an agenda, speakers, etc. Steve Luther asked if the retreat should be tabled due to the budget issues. John Gettinger stated he had the report from the last retreat the commission held. He suggested this be passed out and discussed at the next meeting. Mercedes suggested the report be sent to the commission members prior to the January meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **County Commission Appointments for 2006-2007**

John Gettinger suggested commission members send a short report to their county commissioners about what the commission does and let them know you would like to serve again. Steve Morris reported the process used in the past for appointments begins with letters from the DNR Director of notification to the county commissioners letting them know it's time to appointment or re-appoint commissioners to the WRHCC. We send them a resolution form and an example of a resolution. A contact information sheet is also included so we can contact the commission member. A deadline is given to the county commissioner. Commissioners are appointed for a 2 year term.

### **WRHCC Nominations for 2006 officers**

John Gettinger asked Keith Ruble to serve as chairman for the nominating committee. Ken Einselen will also serve on this committee.

### **Indiana Watershed Leadership Training, Dates, Hours, Participation?**

Ron reported that Purdue is putting on Watershed training that starts in January and you participate over a 6 month period. The cost is \$250 dollars. Louise Jewell made a motion to send Ron, Paul McAfee seconded the motion and it was approved.

### **National River Rally, May 5-9, 2006 in New Hampshire, Participation?**

Ron James reported the River Rally by the River Network will be held May 5-9 in New Hampshire. Commissioners might want to consider attending. Steve Morris stated if anyone is interested in going at the commission's expense, they would have to go through the state out-of-state travel process. This will be discussed further at the January meeting.

### **Select County Representatives to write articles for the next *Reflections*; other items**

Ron James reported he is waiting on a submission for *Reflections* and it will be sent out.

### **Indiana State Government Guide**

Steve Morris reported that Ron James had taken an interest in the Indiana State Government Guide that the Chamber of Commerce puts out and has asked that the commission purchase at least one, at \$6. Paul McAfee made a motion to purchase a copy and Norman Neiburger seconded the motion and it was approved.

### **Announcements**

Steve Morris reported he received a public notice from IDEM regarding rehab work on the Carrolton Bridge over the Wabash River in Carroll County. Steve also shared a news article about \$4.1 million in federal and private funds being dedicated to restore Wabash River wetlands in Warren, Fountain, Parke, Vermillion, Vigo and Sullivan Counties.

Norman Neiburger reported Tippecanoe County had a recent ribbon cutting ceremony for a new 2.5 mile section of the Wabash Heritage Trail. He also stated that the Wabash River Enhancement Corporation had secured assistance from the Purdue Landscape Architecture senior class to develop designs for the Tippecanoe County section of the river corridor. He suggested checking with colleges in your area to see if they would provide the same service as Purdue.

Mercedes Brugh reported that Ball State will be assisting in Cass County. She also reported the city council and county council have partnered on paying consultants to look over how they can connect two trails in Logansport.

John Gettinger asked if the commission wanted to take a position on the toll bridge in New Harmony. It could be kept open as a historical and useful bridge. Norman Neiburger made a motion that Ron James write a letter from the commission in support of saving the bridge. Paul McAfee seconded the motion and it passed.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

**The next meeting will be held January 11, 2006 at the Indiana Government Center, Indianapolis.**